

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 12709

EXDIS

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON AND AMBASSADOR EILTS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EG

SUBJECT: FAHMY'S TRAVEL PLANS; LEBANON; GULF OF SUEZ

REF: CAIRO 12595

1. OSAMA AL-BAZ INFORMED ME TODAY THAT FAHMY'S PLANS FOR TRAVEL TO U.S. ARE VERY MUCH UP IN THE AIR AND THAT THERE IS DISTINCT POSSIBILITY HE WILL NOT GO AT ALL TO U.S. "THIS YEAR", WHICH I TAKE TO REFER TO THIS YEAR'S UNGA. WHEN I REMINDED AL BAZ THAT FAHMY HAD ACCEPTED DATES OF SEPTEMBER 27 AND OCTOBER 4 FOR MEETINGS WITH THE SECRETARY, HE REPEATED THAT BECAUSE OF LEBANESE DEVELOPMENTS, FAHMY MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO GO AT ALL. HE SAID HE WOULD KNOW DEFINITELY BY THURSDAY AND WOULD LET ME KNOW THEN. I TOLD HIM
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THAT YOU BOTH PLANNED TO MEET FAHMY WHEN HE ARRIVES IN

NEW YORK; AL BAZ SAID THAT WOULD BE NICE GESTURE, BUT IT WAS BY NO MEANS SURE THAT FAHMY WOULD GO. COMMENT: MY BEST ESTIMATE NOW IS THAT FAHMY WILL PROBABLY NOT GO, GIVEN NEGOTIATIONS ON LEBANON, RAMADAN BAIRAM FEAST (PROBABLY SEPTEMBER 24-27), OCTOBER 6 CELEBRATION, AND POSSIBLE ARAB MINI-SUMMIT OCTOBER 8.

2. LEBANON. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTION, OSAMA AL BAZ SAID HE WAS STILL OPTIMISTIC THAT A SETTLEMENT OF LEBANESE CRISIS WOULD BE WORKED OUT. HE WOULD NOT BE DRAWN OUT ON BASIS FOR THIS OPTIMISM, BUT IMPLIED FAHMY DEVOTING HIS FULL ATTENTION TO EGYPTIAN EFFORTS TO BRING OFF SOLUTION.

3. GULF OF SUEZ. WHEN I REPEATED THAT I WAS AVAILABLE TO RECEIVE FAHMY'S RESPONSE TO SECRETARY'S MESSAGE ON TALKS WITH ISRAELIS ABOUT AMOCO OPERATION IN GULF OF SUEZ, AL BAZ SAID FAHMY WAS INFORMED OF MY DISCUSSIONS WITH MINPET HILAL ON SEPTEMBER 18 AND THAT WE SHOULD CONSIDER HILAL'S STATEMENTS AS DEFINITIVE GOE RESPONSE. COMMENT. THERE HAS BEEN NO MENTION IN EGYPTIAN PRESS (EXCEPT FOR UPI ITEM IN EGYPTIAN GAZETTE SEPTEMBER 18) CONCERNING RESULTS OF WASHINGTON TALKS WITH ISRAELIS. SENIOR EGYPTIAN EDITOR TOLD ME PRESS HAS INSTRUCTIONS TO LAY OFF SUBJECT. I DO NOT KNOW HOW LONG WRAPS WILL BE KEPT ON GIVEN EXTENSIVE COVERAGE IN ISRAELI MEDIA. END COMMENT.
MATTHEWS UNQTE ROBINSON

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